



AMIT PASHCHHA

## Preserving Monuments on an Eco-Friendly Heritage Route in New Delhi

*The tomb of Mughal Emperor Humayun would figure in a proposed heritage route in New Delhi.*

With 10 million visitors expected to converge on New Delhi for the Commonwealth Games in 2010, it's expected that many of them will want to visit the capital's historic and architectural sights as well as the sports events. But preservationists, historians and ordinary folks who love the heritage of their city may be concerned about the effect of all that tourist traffic.

Help is on the way, though, with a plan to carry visitors in clean-energy shuttle buses along a model heritage route connecting the 16th century Humayun's Tomb and the Red Fort. Just as in many of the world's major cities, the buses would allow visitors to hop

off along the way to see some of the capital's sights that are less well known, then hop back on to travel to the next spot. The reason for the shuttles is to ease congestion and reduce air pollution. The heritage route—planned as the first in a network of such corridors connecting scores of monuments in New Delhi—would feature educational centers, sidewalk seating for those on foot, and lighting that is friendly to the environment.

It's all part of a plan by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage to highlight New Delhi's rich history, present it as a "Heritage City" destination and preserve its treasures for the future. The first route is to

be developed with the help of a \$200,000 grant from the American Express company and the World Monuments Fund, which issues a biannual list of the 100 most endangered heritage sites.

"Tourism is the lifeblood of many iconic sites around the world, so enhancing the visitor experience while finding effective ways to protect and preserve these sites is critical for their survival," said American Express Vice Chairman Ed Gilligan when the grant was announced on November 7, 2007.

—L.K.L.